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It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch - - Committees, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the Congressional Budget Office; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks, especially those in Washington; and (3) major reports from national professional associations. A few new high quality, high relevance think tank-sponsored books are also listed.

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## Reports

- [Item#1](#)

Blogs and Twitter Focus on Michele Bachmann. Emily Guskin. Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism. July 7, 2011.

Michele Bachmann, the Tea Party favorite who formally announced her presidential candidacy on June 27, created a major buzz in social media last week, registering as the dominant subject on blogs as well as a hot topic on Twitter. Most of the commentary was highly critical.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/2053/bachmann-presidential-candidacy-social-media-blogs-twitter> [HTML format, various paging].

#### Item#2

Considerations for a Catastrophic Declaration: Issues and Analysis. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Bruce R. Lindsay and Francis X. McCarthy. July 6, 2011.

The report examines concerns expressed by policymakers and experts that current Stafford Act declaration are inadequate to respond to, and recover from, highly destructive events, and presents the arguments for and against amending the act to add a catastrophe declaration amendment. It also includes data analyses of past and potential disasters to determine what incidents might be deemed as catastrophic, and explores alternative policy options that might obviate the need for catastrophic declarations.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homsec/R41884.pdf> [PDF format, 27 pages].

#### Item#3

European Unconventional Gas Developments: Environmental Issues and Regulatory Challenges in the EU and the U.S. Atlantic Council. Web posted July 7, 2011.

With the growing realization that substantial unconventional gas resources have the potential to play a major role in supplementing conventional gas resources in many countries, it has become important to consider the prospects, challenges and regulations necessary to ensure the safe and environmentally sound development of such resources.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

[http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/403/070711\\_ACUS\\_UnconvGas.PDF](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/070711_ACUS_UnconvGas.PDF) [PDF format, 35 pages].

#### Item#4

The Global Democracy Community Gets a Second Wind in Vilnius. Brookings Institution. Ted Piccone. July 8, 2011.

The vision of an international coalition of democracies committed to support democratic transition and consolidation worldwide took a step closer to reality this month in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, where hundreds of diplomats, parliamentarians, civil society activists and business leaders gathered for the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Democracies. As the only global forum dedicated to fostering cooperation among the world's diverse democratic governments, the ten-year old Community of Democracies to date has been marked more by words than deeds. But a renewed sense of purpose by

the Obama administration and the inspired leadership of newer democracies like Lithuania, Poland, Hungary and Mongolia, coupled with the unfolding promise of the Arab Spring, are yielding some interesting results. Progress is notable in at least three specific areas: democracy assistance, support to civil society, and governance reform of the body itself.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0708\\_lithuania\\_piccone.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0708_lithuania_piccone.aspx) [HTML format, various paging].

#### Item#5

How Much Might Automatic IRAs Improve Retirement Security for Low- and Moderate-Wage Workers? Urban Institute. Barbara Butrica and Richard W. Johnson. July 6, 2011.

Automatic individual retirement accounts (IRAs) could significantly boost retirement savings for millions of low- and moderate-wage workers. A proposal embraced by the Obama administration would require most employers that do not offer retirement plans to establish IRAs for their employees and automatically direct a portion of pay into the accounts, unless employees opt out. The reporting results, based on the Urban Institute's microsimulation model, show that automatic IRAs would boost retirement incomes for as many as half of low-income retirees and three-fifths of moderate-income retirees. For both groups, mean age-70 incomes among those who gain would increase by nearly a fifth.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412360-Automatic-IRAs-Improve-Retirement-Security.pdf> [PDF format, 8 pages].

#### Item#6

Job Creation in the Manufacturing Revival. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Marc Levinson. July 1, 2011.

After a prolonged slump, the U.S. manufacturing sector is showing notable signs of revival. The strengthening of U.S. manufacturing is a subject of intense interest in Congress. Most notably, proponents of support for the manufacturing sector often associate increased manufacturing activity with the creation of jobs for workers without higher education. Evidence suggests, however, that even strong growth in manufacturing output could well have only modest impact on job creation, and is unlikely to reverse the declining demand for workers with low levels of education.

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/167854.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages].

#### Item#7

Linking Costs and Postsecondary Degrees. American Enterprise Institute. Nate Johnson. July 8, 2011.

Given the tight fiscal environment, it is critical that policymakers have a solid grasp on how to think about college costs and accountability so that they will be prepared to make important decisions about budget cuts and higher education policy in the years ahead.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/Linking-Costs-and-Postsecondary-Degress-Johnson-FINAL.pdf> [PDF format, 23 pages].

#### Item#8

Radicalization, Linkage, and Diversity: Current Trends in Terrorism in Europe. RAND Corporation. Lorenzo Vidino. July 6, 2011.

Although it has not suffered a successful attack since the July 7, 2005, bombings in London, Europe perceives itself to be under a constant threat from jihadist-inspired terrorism. Based on a survey of legal documents, intelligence reports, academic literature, and media sources, and on conversations with experts and government officials, the paper provides an overview of current trends in jihadism in Europe from an operational perspective.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/rand/pubs/occasional\\_papers/2011/RAND\\_OP333.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP333.pdf) [PDF format, 49 pages].

#### Item#9

Rethinking a Resource-Based Strategy. Center for Strategic & International Studies. Anthony H. Cordesman. Web posted July 12, 2011.

The U.S. defense community is only beginning to address the full implications of the challenges it faces in terms of international economic competition and shrinking budgets. Its strategic planning and analysis is still largely conceptual and often focused so far in the future as to be virtually meaningless in providing useful guidance for allocating resources, and making hard decision about strategic commitments, force plans, procurement plans, and manpower plans. The author has developed a summary briefing showing the key resource trends that affect U.S. strategy and the need to develop a new approach that pays as much attention to resources and costs as to the other aspects of strategy.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

[http://csis.org/files/publication/110712\\_US\\_Resource\\_Based\\_Threats.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/110712_US_Resource_Based_Threats.pdf) [PDF format, 108 pages].

#### Item#10

South China Sea: A Commons for China Only? YaleGlobal. Carlyle A. Thayer. July 7, 2011.

The 1982 U.N. Convention on Law of the Sea recognizes the common heritage of the world's oceans with a set of laws organizing exclusive zones for nations 200 nautical miles from their respective coasts. Waters beyond are open for use by all in ways that contribute to peace and friendly relations. By declaring sovereignty over the South China Sea, China rejects the convention, argues Carlyle A. Thayer. Current tensions over the South China Sea began in 2009 after the U.N. Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf set a deadline for submitting claims for extended continental shelves beyond UNCLOS's 200 nautical miles. After Vietnam and Malaysia submitted claims, China submitted a map with nine dotted lines, claiming most of the sea. Six nations border the sea, and other nations also have great stakes in the outcome. That extensive claim lies behind the growing tension in the South China Sea, according to the report. *[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/south-china-sea-commons-china-only> [HTML format, various paging].

**Item#11**

The United Arab Emirates (UAE): Issues for U.S. Policy. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Kenneth Katzman. June 23, 2011.

For the Obama Administration and many in Congress, there are concerns about the UAE oversight and management of a complex and technically advanced initiative such as a nuclear power program. This was underscored by dissatisfaction among some Members of Congress with a U.S.-UAE civilian nuclear cooperation agreement. The agreement was signed on May 21, 2009, and submitted to Congress that day. It entered into force on December 17, 2009. However, expert concerns about potential leakage of U.S. and other advanced technologies through the UAE to Iran, in particular, remain.

*[Note: contains copyrighted material].*

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS21852.pdf> [PDF format, 20 pages].